

the State of Nebraska, to try and provide a mechanism that we can provide long-term capital for agriculture which I think, if it is not already needed, will be needed in the future. With that, I would move the advancement of the bill.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Harris, please. Senator Barrett, would you like to speak until Harris is ready. Okay, Senator Harris.

SENATOR BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Thank you, Senator Harris. Just a comment or two regarding the bill itself, 849. As a member of the Ag Committee, Chaired by Senator Johnson, I had considerable reservations about this piece of legislation as it was introduced, and expressed my opinion at that time. Poorly written, overly broad, but thanks to the work of the ag staff, Senator Johnson, and the executive branch of government, I think it's now been pared down to where it is palatable, although perhaps unnecessary and unworkable insofar as the country banks are concerned. I suggest this because of some of the bankers I have talked to, principally in my district, although I can support, conceptually, the bill today, and will watch it with interest as it crosses the board. The creation of a secondary market is probably admirable at this point because there is no such secondary market, to my knowledge, at this juncture. I think probably such a market would increase the availability, certainly, of these types of loans, and increase the availability of dollars for ag loans. So, conceptually, again I can support it as an alternative to some of the severe ag problems that we see in this state. Insofar as one banker's concern that I talked to, he was very frank and suggested that it would give bankers greater flexibility to sell their present ag loans to the authority, thereby freeing up some dollars to make some additional loans. But he was concerned that those freed up dollars would not go for ag loans, but would go for commercial or business operations, certainly a concern of mine. If a farmer is having problems then it would, perhaps, be unlikely that the banker would be willing to loan such a farmer additional dollars, bringing up then the question in my mind about some things that were mentioned at the hearing. Apparently the intent here is to deal only with quality loans, thereby insuring a safe operation of the authority. But concerns then arise as to whether the farmer, who is having problems, has one of those quality